

*The Divine Testimony to the Character and Mission
of Jesus Christ:*

2

CONSIDERED IN A

S E R M O N,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF THE
REV. MR. SAMUEL ECKING,

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IN CHESTER,
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, FEB. 5, 1785, IN THE
TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF HIS AGE

TO WHICH IS ADDED THE

O R A T I O N

DELIVERED AT HIS INTERMENT IN WREXHAM,

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By JOSEPH JENKINS, A. M.

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A

SERMON, &c.

MATTHEW iii. 17.

—This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

UPON the departure of a friend to a distant country, or upon his departure out of the world, it is common for his acquaintance to take notice of certain phrases, or modes of expression, which were either peculiar to himself, or which he was used to adopt; and when the like phrases occur, in the conversation of an indifferent person, though without intention, they lead to the recollection of our departed friend; a circumstance, which if, in particular cases, it may revive an intemperate and unavailing grief, in other cases may serve to keep alive the memory of a respected character; and if there be any thing weighty in the words, our affection for him may at least bring the sentiment with the greater force to our minds. I shall be happy therefore, if the text I have read do attract your notice the more, when you are told, that the reason for the making it the ground of a Funeral Discourse for your late Pastor, is, that it was frequently in his mouth, and more especially, for some weeks past,

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what he dwelt upon in conversation, with peculiar sweetness and energy. But the words come to us with a much higher recommendation. They were spoken by the Most High, in attestation of the divine character and office of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were spoken also in honour of that ordinance, wherein (as the first and leading duty of their profession of obedience to the faith) God has commanded his people to distinguish themselves from the world, the ordinance of baptism. What a grand, an august vision was that which appeared at *Jordan*, when the baptism of Jesus being ended, as he came up out of the water, the heavens were opened, some visible representation of the Holy Ghost hovered over him, and a voice from God the Father proclaimed, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!* The same words were also repeated on another occasion, when Christ was transfigured, *Matt. xvii. 5.* To confirm the faith of certain of his disciples, to convince them of the lustre of his character, and thereby qualify them, with the more abundant confidence to preach him to the world, they were admitted to behold him adorned with celestial splendor, and a voice came with the like testimony from the excellent glory.—Our remarks will take the words, in the order they lie before us, as a declaration,

I. THAT Christ is the Father's *beloved Son*;

II. THAT in him the Father is *well pleased*;

THE former referring to his original dignity, the latter to him as Mediator; and both together containing (as your deceased Pastor used to observe) a compendious, and at the same time comprehensive view of the Gospel of the Grace of God.

I. THEN

1. THEN, Our Lord Jesus Christ is here stiled the *beloved Son* of the Father; a title declarative of that glory he originally possessed.

1. HE is the *Son of God*.—And while we admit that this title is given to different beings, and in various senses in scripture, it is evident that its application to Christ, betokens a pre-eminence in him to all others who are so denominated. Angels are called the Sons of God, and *Adam* was so called, because both had their existence immediately from God himself. Saints are stiled his sons and children, partly on account of their adoption into God's family, and also because, being born of God by faith in Christ Jesus, they are through grace translated into the liberty of the gospel, and by that means become partakers of the communicable attributes of the divine nature, God's wisdom, his happiness, his love, his holiness. But as one method of proving the true and proper Deity of Christ, is that of adducing texts in which those attributes of God, that are confessedly incommunicable to any creature, are yet asserted to belong to Christ (such as *Eternity*, Mic. v. 2. *Omnipotence*, Rev. i. 8. *Omniscience*, John xxi. 17. &c.) why do they not also demonstrate, that the term *only-begotten Son of God*, signifies a relation superior to that of creation, or of appointment to the office of Mediator; (from the last of which our text expressly distinguishes it) in short, that it is an avowal of him as, in a manner inconceivable to us, and therefore inexplicable by us, possessed in the strictest sense of Deity, and of the same nature with the Father and Holy Spirit? As the title *Son of man* denotes, that he was, in one sense really a man, why does

not that of the *Son of God* equally point out his deity? He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, in whom all the effulgence of the Godhead dwells, and by whom it shines forth to the admiration of them who believe. Nor, I confess, am I able to discern the propriety of the Apostle's reasoning, *Rom. viii. 32.* that the Father *spared not his own Son, but delivered him up*, and therefore *with him will freely give all things*, if Christ were not his greatest gift; if he were not his *own proper Son*, as the original signifies, previous to his sparing him; if he were not his Son in a sense, in which no created being could be so entitled. But I stop here, as I mean to resume this argument, and consider its utility, in the latter part of my discourse. At present, the doctrine I hope being in a general way established, by the scriptures we have cited, let us ask,

2. WHY was the term *beloved* added to that of Son? No doubt the epithet *Son of God* implies, that as the affection of a parent is presumed to be at all times, and in all situations, unalterable, such is the affection of the Eternal Father for his Son. But it was highly expedient, that in that moment he should avow the relation of Jesus to him, and his own reciprocal affection, because from the moment of his baptism, our Lord was to enter upon the publick display of his character, and of course, to be beset by hosts of enemies. It was known, that the prince of darkness would first of all engage him in person, and being vanquished in that form would leave him only for a season; — that all whom Satan could instigate would be set against him; — that instead
of

of being caressed as the Saviour of sinners; he would be despised and rejected of men; — that as he took upon him the form of a servant, poverty and meanness would be his lot, during the whole of his pilgrimage through the world; — yea, that the very people he came personally to, with the message of salvation, would be the most forward to persecute him; and that at last they would drive him out of the world, with all the circumstances of misery and infamy they were capable of. It was highly proper then, at his entrance upon this trying scene, to give him, to give his inferior nature, such a testimonial of love and affection, that if the world knew him not, his Father did not slight him; that if the world persecuted him, his Father would support him; yea, that even when heaven would seem to conspire with earth to afflict him, and, from the emotions his soul felt, he would cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* yet only the present sense of love would be suspended; his Father would render him victorious over all opposition, and at last seat him, as his beloved Son, on the right hand of the majesty on high. — Why might not this epithet be added to the former also, to strengthen the idea in our minds, of the greatness of our Lord's condescension, in undertaking our cause, seeing he was infinitely happy before, in the bosom of his Father; as well as to intimate to us, that being the beloved Son of God, no one was so able to conciliate the regards of the Father to us; being himself affectionately regarded by him, he was perfectly capable of recommending us? — From hence then, we pass naturally to the

II. PARTICULAR in my text, That in Christ the Father is *well-pleased*; which is an idea clearly distinguishable from the former, and suggests his *approbation* of the part assumed by the *Son*, in the economy of salvation. — For the explanation of this we shall premise, that God is not only to be considered as the former of all things, and the upholder of the world, but as the moral governor of men, who has given a law, for the regulation of their conduct and promotion of their happiness. The law is holy, just and good. It was ordained unto life, as its fulfilment was the condition of the divine favour, and as the very nature of its obedience contains that order and regularity, with which happiness is inseparably united. In what manner, however, sin entered into the world, is not my province, at this time, to enter upon. That sin is in the world, that it has overspread the world, that it has been committed by all men without exception, that it has polluted them, and brought them under condemnation, is a fact too glaring to be disproved, I was going to say denied. Whatever pains are taken to soften the matter, there is a witness for God in the minds of men, which will ere long speak irresistibly, and does speak now, though, through the ignorance of the many, its voice is not understood. The Apostle of the Gentiles calls it, *Heb. x. 22. An evil conscience*, or the consciousness of evil, and fear of its condemnation hereafter, which even the amusements of life cannot wholly divert, which is the main cause of the fretfulness, discontent and dissatisfaction so prevalent in the world; which adds so much to the burden of outward afflictions, that without this they would appear

appear comparatively light; and which arms death with a sting so formidable, that the generality had rather, after all, keep the evils they have, than exchange them for evils they do not know. — Now the design of the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, was to bring peace on earth; and speaking of the approbation the Father gave to this undertaking let us enquire,

I. INTO the import of the term *well-pleased*.

II. INTO the several particulars of the character and work of Christ, which were so *well-pleasing* to the Father.

I. THE term *well-pleased*, in the present connection, includes two ideas; that of *pacifying*, and that of *complacency* or *delight*. In the

(1.) View, even the twilight notions of *Balak* king of *Moab* led him to use it, *Mic. vi. 7. Will the Lord, says he, be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?* The word *pleased* in this sense signifies to appease, to expiate, to avert wrath; and imports, that as the law of God has been violated and dishonoured by sin — so dishonoured, that every act of iniquity is a direct denial of his right to reign over us — and as the suffering sin to pass unpunished, would annihilate the authority of God, and bring his government into contempt, his justice will by no means clear the guilty; complete satisfaction must be given. And the Lord Jesus appearing thus to put away sin, the Father here declares his satisfaction in him, as a person suitable to the vast undertaking; so that when sacrifice and burnt offering fell infinitely short of value, as a ransom for the soul, and the Son, by the spirit of prophecy, intimated, *Lo, I come; in the*

volume of the book it is written of me; Pl. xl. 7. We may consider our text as a beautiful reply, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased.* For,

(2.) To the former idea we may add, that of *complacency and delight*. — I have thought therefore, that the word in my text alludes distantly to *Isa. xlii. 21.* A passage that (though certain learned writers put a different construction upon it) I cannot avoid applying to the Lord Jesus Christ; *The Lord is well-pleased for his righteousness sake, he will magnify the law and make it honourable.** The original signifies an intenseness of delight, in looking forward to what Christ was to accomplish. Was he to fulfil the law? yes; and to magnify it. Was he to take off the veil of dishonour which the sins of men had thrown over it? yes; and to render its appearance magnificently glorious; to cast that splendor upon it (shall I say, which the

* There is no difficulty in this application of the passage, except how Christ can be said to be *blind and deaf*, blind though *perfect*, v. 19. and I think this is easily solved, by quoting another passage, *Isa. llii. 7.* where he is also said to be *dumb*, and supposing both to relate to his intrepidity and constancy in his sufferings, that he *opened not his mouth*, to murmur or make objections, and that he was *blind and deaf* to all that could be urged to deter him from perseverance in his work. In this view the transition from v. 18 to 19, is very beautiful. While God calls upon those that were culpably blind and deaf to see and hear, he takes occasion to mention *one*, to whose honour it might be said, that he was *blind and deaf*, and through whom there was salvation for them: Whereas taking the passage to intend *unfaithful ministers* in that day, there is a much greater difficulty in consistently explaining v. 21, which (unless there be some material variation in the collated bible, that I am unapprized of) runs literally, *The Lord hath been delighted, because of his righteousness, he will amplify the law, and render it magnificent.*

the punishment of sinners could not have restored; yes;) which even the obedience of all the sons of men could not have exhibited in it, if sin had never entered, but the whole human race remained innocent. The Father, accordingly, professes himself to be, not merely pacified but *pleased*, not merely pleased but *well-pleased*; that not merely was a full equivalent to be offered, but that by virtue of which, the balance of favour would lie abundantly on the side of those whom Christ undertook for. Thus *where sin abounded grace hath much more abounded, and reigned through righteousness to eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. v. 20; 21.*—And let us now enquire,

II. INTO the particulars of the *character* and *work* of Christ, which warranted this declaration; that we may not view it as proceeding simply from the predilection of the Father for his Son; but as being, in point of law, the equitable decision of the judge of all the earth.—And here,

First, His *character* the Father was *well-pleased* with. He assumed that character, which was exactly adapted to our state as sinners. As sin was committed in the human nature, it was necessary that the atonement should be made in the nature in which the offence was given; for this purpose, therefore, our Lord was made a man; he came *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. viii. 3.—But the heinousness of a crime rises in proportion to the dignity of him who is insulted by it: As God is the highest, the most majestick and most excellent of all beings, an offence against him is of infinite heinousness; and (separate from the thought of the numberless evils sin has introduced into this world) in itself merits

everlasting punishment. Upon this principle, therefore, we learn the justice of that denunciation, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii.

10. If the more aggravated the nature, and the greater the number of the sins, the heavier will be the degree of punishment, the duration of the punishment of one must be the same as that of millions, must be for ever. Who then could expiate one offence? Would it be possible for the sinner himself? I ask further, What mere creature could bring such expiation? Not to speak of the impropriety of supposing a creature to satisfy for any one but himself, as God may demand his all, and put him into what situation he thinks best: If one creature be higher than another in the sight of his Creator, yet the utmost satisfaction of the most exalted creature could amount to no more than finite, and therefore could not expiate one sin; even as the whole life of an honest man cannot atone for one act of dishonesty another man commits, and as bounded merit must fall infinitely short of boundless malignity. How much less then could it make amends for the innumerable sins, of the innumerable sinners who were to be redeemed; for to assert, that the divine appointment could render what atonement he thought fit sufficiently ample (however lax a way of talking it be, and however obvious the drift) if admitted, is no proof that God would call that a sufficient compensation, which is unequal to the full display of his perfect holiness and inflexible justice. But Christ was God manifest in the flesh, and consequently possessed a dignity capable of giving efficacy to every part of his work,

work, of rendering it completely valuable to answer the designs for which he undertook it; he is *the man of God's right hand, the Son of man he made strong for himself*, Ps. lxxx. 17. The very description of him as *made of a woman, made under the law*, Gal. iv. 4. intimates at once his pre-existence, and that in himself he was bound by no law, but the necessity of his own holiness. He was above the law; above its obligations and above its sanctions; yet he put himself *under the law*, to redeem from its curse those who were by nature bound to fulfil the law, but who had dared to disobey it, and lay helplessly exposed to its vengeance. So that this head represents the Deity of the Son of God, to be a doctrine of that importance and necessity to the gospel, that the main efficacy of his redemption flows from it. Leave that out, and all the rest is a blank; sin is unatoned for; our mighty guilt remains upon our defenceless heads; and the wrath of God abides upon us. But let that truth be maintained as a first principle, and thence arise hope, comfort and joy; the glory and perfection of the god-head shine through every part of the christian system; it is a suitable relief for the criminal and perishing; and there is no malady of the soul, to which its virtue does not reach. — This will appear more evidently by reflecting,

Secondly, On the work Christ engaged for, which was to obey the law — and to suffer its penalty, for the justification of sinners.

(1.) To obey the law, and thereby illustrate its beauty and excellency, its propriety and glory; for had he come merely to suffer, this part would have been deficient. Mere punishment might discover the

strictness and terror of the law, but would never have proved its order, regularity, fitness, and consequent reasonableness. But in Jesus we behold a pattern of perfection. Look to what part of his life you will, and you see him to be without sin. His obedience like the coat that covered him, was one seamless whole. *He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.* And when to the purity of his conduct we add the lustre of his god head, every action, viewed through that medium, carries with it a grandeur and brightness, as much above that of a sinless and exemplary man, as the divine nature excels the human. Form in your minds a picture of a prince habited in the dress of a peasant. If he condescend to perform the duties of his new situation, and live as a peasant would, yet will the education and manners of the prince make their way through the meanness of his disguise, and persuade people of taste and gentility, that his real quality is superior to his apparent rank. Thus also the obedience of Jesus bore the stamp of his divinity, and manifested the *righteousness of God*. They who were eye-witnesses of it bare record, and such as believingly contemplate Jesus know that their record is true: *The word, say they, was made flesh, and dwelt among us; (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth, John i. 14.* — The like may be observed,

(2.) CONCERNING his sufferings. If a robbery be committed, and the stolen property afterwards returned, that is a redress to the injured individual, but none to the publick justice of the community, on the security of which the offence has infringed.

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The divine holiness of Jesus amply sets forth the beauty and fitness of God's commands, but that alone would not have marked their indispensable obligation, and that sinners at their peril break them. Satan, in that case, might have had some ground for the suggestion, *Ye shall not surely die.* The wisest of regulations, without a penalty, and that penalty inflicted, is no better than *good advice.* But the law having denounced death upon the disobedient, and declared that every transgression should receive its just recompence of reward, we behold Jesus standing in the place of sinners. We behold him wounded for our sins, and the chastisement of our peace laid upon him. Who can recount the sorrows of his mind, or agonies of his body, when it pleased the Lord to bruise him? Yet he voluntarily resigned himself to finish all that was required. He endured the cross, despising the shame. And when his God head is considered as sympathizing with, supporting under, and enhancing the value of the sufferings of the human nature, we may conclude that the dignity of his character compensated for the want of duration in those sufferings; that as his short passage through the world displayed the excellency of the law, so these short-lived sufferings did its strictness and just severity; and that both unite in forming that perfect and everlasting righteousness, whereby transgression is done away, sin is finished, and sinners are justified.

Join these reflections in your minds; the divine character and office, the obedience, sufferings and death of our Emmanuel; and while your hearts are fixed with astonishment, perhaps with rapture, on the variety of particulars included therein, let me ask,
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Did the Father in my text express his delight in Jesus; at his entrance on his publick ministry? And did he not give a more publick and decisive testimony of his approbation, by raising him up from the dead? When our Lord in his last agonies, said, *It is finished*, he appealed to heaven, that the work of redemption was done. And did not his discharge from the grave witness, that the very last farthing of the debt was paid? What else can the Apostle intend by saying, *Rom. i. 4. That he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead?* What was there in his resurrection, any more than his other miracles, that particularly pointed to his Deity? If an infidel by reading of the resurrection of Christ, might be convinced of his divine commission, is there any medium whereby, simply from that event, he would be led to the conclusion, that Christ was God in our nature? There is nothing upon the face of the argument to make it out; nor does this inference appear natural, *Christ arose from the dead, therefore, he is the true God.* But take the text in another light, and it is highly consistent. Our Lord professed to be the *Son of God*, and as such, to bring full redemption to sinners. He professed to partake of *the spirit of holiness* (that is, of the divine perfections) through the eternal spirit to offer himself without spot unto God, and thereby to give infinite preciousness to his righteousness, for the justification of the ungodly. Hence he spoke of himself as *the Son, whom the Father had sanctified and sent into the world*, John x. 36. Now had he not been God as well as man, the sacrifice he made would have fallen short of paying the debt he became answerable for,

for, and his body could not have been released from the prison of the grave. But his resurrection confirmed the truth of all he had spoken. Agreeably to this we read, *Acts ii. 24.* that God loosed the pains, that is, the punishment, of death from him, because it was not possible he should be holden of it. His resurrection therefore was an authoritative declaration, that he had fulfilled all he undertook, and by one offering for ever perfected them that are sanctified. So that if the obedience and death of Christ were the payment of the debt, his resurrection was the receipt in full, the discharge of his redeemed, from every demand the law had against them. — So is the Father well-pleased in his beloved Son; and from hence we learn,

(1.) THAT if the character and work of Christ be thus satisfactory, then nothing else is necessary to the justification and acceptance of a sinner; nay to add any thing to it is highly impertinent, is provoking to the majesty and purity of God. 'Tis enough to say *we are accepted in the beloved*, to set forth our share in the favour of God, and our title to eternal life. Christ is the Father's beloved, and they who are united to him are, for his sake, loved with an affection as inseparable as that himself enjoys. The righteousness of Christ has so amply fulfilled the requirements of justice, yea, cast that additional lustre upon its demands, that to bring any thing else for our acceptance with God is superfluous. If we have the Lord our righteousness, can we be more perfect in the eye of divine justice, than through *that righteousness which is of God*? What can add to infinity? And what then be brought to encrease the brightness

ness of the work of Jesus, through which God accounts believing sinners righteous? Suppose the works of a creature who has never sinned, were to be put in comparison with the righteousness of the Son of God? How mean would the highest creature-excellencies appear in the presence of his! Rather, how would they sink into nothing, and Christ be all in all! like the comparatively faint light of a candle, would be dim, would be extinguished in the blaze of the meridian sun. Shall man then talk of his virtues, upon the account of which God is to shew him regard? Shall a worm of the earth speak of conditions of the divine favour? Shall a sinner who is all over defiled by sin, and has drank down iniquity like water, presume to offer any plea but his misery? pretend to offer any thing from himself, in any form or respect, as a reason for which God, the judge of all, should be induced to look more placidly upon him than upon another? I know it is objected, that
 “ To maintain the righteousness of Christ to be
 “ the alone reason why God accepts of any sinner
 “ will endanger the interests of holiness, and lead
 “ to security in the indulgence of sin;” at least this is the pretext which the unbelieving heart brings forward, while it is establishing a righteousness of its own. But if we prove as we go on, that holiness is better secured by the doctrine I am defending, I hope this objection will be removed. And let me ask, Is there no method of promoting holiness, but by offering an affront to the majesty of heaven and earth? No way but by pride, which the Lord abhors? When the Most High has provided a righteousness in which he has declared himself well-pleased, who shall dare

to contradict him, to chuse for himself, to produce any other ground of hope, which is in effect to arraign the provision God has made as insufficient? Would any one, that thinks aright, think this the way to please God or secure holiness? Rather, is it not the way to awaken the divine indignation, and to promote wickedness? I have no doubt but impartial observation will prove the assertion to be fact, that while faith is made of none effect, while Christ as our only righteousness is neglected, the sinners dependance mixed, and the gospel, free for the guilty, is hampered, by conditions or qualifications, in one shape or in another, a pharisaical hypocrisy is making large strides over the profession of religion, the immoralities of church-members are often winked at, the mere form of godliness, or scarce that, is (perhaps without a suspicion of its falsehood) slothfully rested in, and the power is despised, set at naught, and evil spoken of.

(2.) Is the character and work of Christ alone be sufficient to justify a sinner in the sight of God, and every other plea be unnecessary and inadmissible, then Christ alone is a sufficient remedy for every disorder of the soul. For instance, that sacrifice alone which appeased the wrath of an offended God is, if believed in, altogether sufficient to bring peace and substantial relief to a guilty mind. The simple question is, Are you a sinner? Then Christ is an able, a free, a faithful Saviour; able to save to the uttermost; and his love is as free as his righteousness is complete. He came to seek and to save the lost; not to call men as righteous, but as sinners. But you ask, "Is the gospel declaration *to me*?" It is indefinitely to

to sinners, and why not to you? Will you say that you are a greater and more distinguished sinner than others? Christ came to *save the chief of sinners*, 1 Tim. i. 16. And his *righteousness is upon all them that believe*, without any difference; and that because *all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*, Rom. iii. 22. But you ask, "Must I not be converted, and have some token of a gracious work within me, as a pre-requisite to encourage me to go to Christ, and hope that he will have mercy upon me?" No. You are deceived, if you fancy you can have any such pre-requisite. You cannot have any measure of a work of grace within you unless you receive it from Christ, for *he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life*, 1 John v. 12. And you can receive nothing from Christ, unless you believe on him, and if you believe on him, it must be merely as a sinner, looking upon yourself to be even as others; nay, after you believe, and receive comfort from the work of Jesus, you will every day see more and more in yourself, to sink you in your own esteem, to hide pride from you, that you will not think the better of yourself, even for the grace you have received, but as a sinner, lie in the dust before God, and live only upon Christ. Whosoever therefore entertains an imagination, that he has any good work, of any kind, whereby he is a more proper object of hope in Christ than the very vilest, he takes a method both uncomfortable and unsafe; uncomfortable, because to say the best of it, his hope is built upon the frames of his own mind, upon the man's good opinion of himself. As long then as his mind is animated (perhaps mechanically so), his pride tells him he is a child

of

of God; but when the warmth of his mind abates, he is doubting and disconsolate; nor is it wonderful that the house falls which is built upon the sand. And need I add any more to prove that it is unsafe? Does it not betray ignorance of Christ, and a suspicion that his work is not enough to bring peace to the soul? In short, does not the chief of the man's dependance lie in himself? Does he not make a favour of that good thing he fancies is wrought in him, and Christ profit him nothing? What then is this, but to chuse the quag-mire instead of the solid rock; a delusion also the more ensnaring and dangerous, if glossed over with the specious covering of an adherence to the doctrines of free grace?—But you reply, “Must I not at least be awakened and convinced of sin, before I believe, and in order to my believing?” I have no doubt that if you believe on the Son of God, you will be convinced of sin (of the sin of unbelief in the first place, *John* xvi. 9. and of other sins by consequence) but I must be free in observing, that I do not see how you can have any awakenings, or convictions of sin, *before* you believe, that have the nature of spiritual life in them, or are, in the least, evidences of deliverance from condemnation. I wish however to be understood here. I am not denying, that awakenings and convictions, working in a way of very painful distress in the soul, have often been useful in rousing the attention of careless or self-deceived sinners; nor yet that the hand of God is unconcerned in them. But how often have we known persons, whose hearts were at one time almost broken with dismay for their sins, afterwards discover, that they never had the smallest

smallest true conviction of sin! How many have we known too, or read of in scripture (such as *Zaccheus* and others) who were brought to the saving knowledge of the Redeemer, immediately upon hearing his gospel, and without any previous terrors at all! And they who have been exercised with these terrors, and come afterwards to know the free grace of the gospel, found that the main reason of their former indulged horror, was ignorance, and unbelief of the great salvation, and that the peace and liberty they afterwards enjoyed, was of a nature which their former fears were by no means conducive unto. To lay a particular stress then upon such convictions, or to make curious distinctions between some of them as natural and others as spiritual, in order to point out the latter, as denoting a person to be already a gracious soul, and as having, on this account, greater encouragement to hope in Christ than other sinners, what is it but self-righteousness leading the soul off from Christ the only hope of the guilty, and turning the sentence of death into a ground of consolation? Because, to say the utmost we can of these awakenings, they are only the law working wrath, the sense of the divine displeasure, arising from the impressions of his law upon the conscience; and when a certain course, or degree of convictions, or legal sorrow, is represented as a necessary preparative for Christ, without which also a man is not to be directed with any personal hope to him, this is so different from the gospel method of bringing rest to the labouring soul, that it can be proved, that no sinner will willingly look at his sins before he believes on Christ, and receives peace from the grand remedy; the very

terrors

terrors of his mind will frighten him from examining into the worst of his case, and he will regard iniquity in his heart, not possess an ingenuous sense of its malignity. The Apostle *Paul* accordingly replying to the question of the trembling and astonished Jailor, "*What must I do to be saved?*" did not stop to argue with him, concerning the nature of his convictions, in order to determine whether the work within him was real or not, before he gave him encouragement, but cried out directly and without hesitation, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*" He knew there could be no gracious work, while the man was an unbeliever; and therefore preached the gospel to him, as he did without distinction, to all that were in his house; the effect of which through grace was, that they believed, were baptized, and rejoiced in God. *Acts* xvi. 30.—This then is a capital article to be maintained; in Christ are all things, Christ receiveth sinners; and such may without any delay, without any other conviction than that they are sinners, without perplexing themselves concerning the nature, the strength or depth of their convictions, without hoping or waiting for any previous work or principle of grace, come to him immediately, and receive life and salvation from him. If this be believed by you, through the witness of God's spirit to its truth; if the glory, fulness and freeness of Christ's righteousness be understood, and credited upon the testimony of God, you will need nothing else to compose your minds; you will look for peace to no other quarter; you will be so delighted with this, that all things else you will count as dung (the best as the vilest of abominations) in com-

Comparison of Jesus; the contemplation of every other excellence will be as lost time in your esteem, to that of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. O, how will this be to you tranquility and joy! You will embrace the truth and cleave to it, as your most valuable, your only portion. It will soften every pain in life, subdue the fears of death, and be to you a foretaste of immortal glory. It will shed abroad the love of God in your heart, by the Holy Ghost given to you. It will draw forth all your love to God, to your Redeemer, and to his people, with whom you will be one spirit. It will open up the springs of true repentance in your souls, a godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto life: And while you rejoice in Christ Jesus, you will look upon him whom you have pierced and mourn, yea be ashamed and confounded, and in bitterness for your sins. It will purify your hearts through faith, and fire you with zeal for the honour of God. It will, in short, effectually secure the practice of holiness, from better principles than the dread of punishment, or the mercenary idea, of moving the regard of God by what you do, from the free and unforced principle of love, the affection of children to a Father; and bought with a price, you will glorify God in your bodies and spirits which are his. The more freely Christ is trusted in as the Saviour of sinners, the more effectually will the grace that bringeth salvation teach, to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the world. But how differently do these things appear to the carnal from the enlightened mind! They are all plain to him that understandeth. To them that believe they
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are the wisdom of God, and the power of God. But the carnal mind accounts them foolishness, because it savours only the things that be of the flesh. Faith is the gift of God; and *Or* may he, by his spirit persuade you, to search the scriptures daily, whether these things be so, and to look up to him, the Father of lights, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, that you may be taught of God, and know the truth as it is in Jesus. If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed; but if you are unbelievers, notwithstanding a demureness of countenance, an apparent solemnity of devotion, attended with sobriety of life; notwithstanding the outward dress of your religion be unexceptionable, and with confidence you lay claim to the inward power, the wrath of the lamb will wax hot against you, and consume you with the rest of his adversaries. *Examine yourselves then in the first place, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves by the word of truth; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates? 2 Cor. xiii. 5.*—Once more,

(3.) If Christ be the Father's beloved Son, and in him he is *well pleased*, then *hear ye him*. This inference was expressly annexed to that repetition of our text, given at the transfiguration of Jesus, and it would be unpardonable to omit it. Our deceased brother frequently observed therefore, that the words with this addition, contain all that a man is to believe, and all a believer is to do. Must we hear Christ in regard to our faith, and not in regard to our practice also? Have we tasted of his love, and sweetly allured by that, is it our desire to glorify him? *If* says he, *ye love me, keep my commandments; he that*
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hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, John xiv. 15, 21. Is not Christ himself the best judge of the particular manner, the particular duties, in which we ought to glorify him? Shall we say we are his and wish to obey him, and yet follow a will of our own? May we not then, while we think we are doing Christ service, be actually dishonouring him, because our obedience is not after the pattern he hath given us? Is it not the character of Christ's sheep, *that they hear his voice and follow him,* John x. 27. And what can that intend, but that they hear him and ask, "What wilt thou have me to do?" They hear him, and do not make excuses for standing off from any part of instituted duty—they hear him, not the voice of men, of any set of men, of any they presume to be good men—that there is that musick in the voice of Christ, that, charmed by it, they hear him alone?—Men, to say the best of them, are fallible. Christ is the only true guide. His regulations are so clear, so plain, so explicit, and have moreover that fitness in them, that they speak for themselves, and want no foreign comment. Would it not, for instance, be a reflection upon the wisdom of Jesus, if while he professed to leave rules for his worship and ordinances, he left them in that confused and indeterminate manner, that some would be in doubt whether such rules were given, or given otherwise than as temporary expedients, and others would be driven to the Old Testament, to draw from thence (by forced analogies and uncertain consequences) an explanation of his meaning? Would that prove the New Testament to be the clearer, or the more dark dispensation of the

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two? Who, for example, would think of going to *Moses*, to learn, from his institution of the Passover, how Jesus intended the Lord's Supper should be administered? Would not the very idea excite ridicule? Why then must we look back to the legal rite of circumcision (a mark simply of being *under the law*, Rom. ii. 26. Gal. v. 3.) for directions in the New Testament and evangelical ordinance of baptism? Must we apply to the law, for an elucidation of the gospel? Must we hearken to *Moses* rather than to Christ? to the servant rather than *the beloved Son, in whom the Father is well-pleased*? No. The Father has said, *Hear ye him*; and let those that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity call no man master but him. Enlivened by his love, and animated by his bright example, let them not confer with flesh and blood, with usages and established customs, (which, unless divinely authorized, ought to be of no weight in matters of religion) but what Christ commands, that do, both as the only way of shewing forth his praise, and the way in which he has appointed to meet with and bless his faithful followers. *Lo*, says he, *I am with you always, even to the end of the world*, Matt. xxviii. 20. — The like may be said of the nature and form of his church, with the several orders of his house. Did he leave these articles to chance; or with a latitude; that they might be modelled according as whim, fashion, or worldly influence should prevail? Or did he leave them so unsettled, that we should be obliged to gather them from hints and scraps scattered up and down in his word, and of course be in a state of total uncertainty about them? Christ was not such an obscure lawgiver. Let us then

hear him, and stand fast in the liberty, with which he hath made us free.— This is a sketch of the doctrine in my text, and these the inferences deducible from it. Such also in general was the preaching of your late Pastor: Which brings me to a painful part of my present appointment, to hold him up to your recollection, who lately spoke from this place, so much to your satisfaction, but who is by death removed from you. Yet the exhortation of scripture being to *remember them who have spoken unto you the word of God*, Heb. xiii. 7. this sorrowful memorial may not be without its use.

Mr. Ecking was a native of *Shrewsbury*. He told me, that he was not without some awakenings of conscience, even in his very early years; not enough indeed, to break the natural attachment of the heart to vanity and folly; yet enough to restrain him from running into those vices, which the generality of young men give way to; and enough to convince him, when he had acquired more experience, that there may be serious alarms in the mind, concerning the evil consequences of sin, productive also of many seemingly good resolutions, and a temporary regularity of conduct (which are now often depended on as hopeful signs of true grace) while the heart is destitute of the knowledge of God the Saviour, and without one spark of real religion. — Being however at length called effectually by the grace of God, the change in him was proved substantial, by his totally abandoning the company and diversions of the ungodly, and joining himself to those that feared the Lord, at a season of life when the tide of juvenile passions

and flow of animal spirits, too often render maxims of prudence, and the authority as well as advice of friends, absolutely unavailing. — The dispute about baptism, started in that town in the year 1776, determined him also what profession of religion he ought to chuse, as most agreeable to the word of God. The controversy indeed had that effect upon him, which it were to be wished all books of controversy might have upon their readers, to engage him to study the bible more diligently, and receive the truth from God himself. Upon this principle Mr. *Ecking* was baptized, and joined the *Baptist-Church*; of which he was an honourable member seven years; and recommended by which church, he was called to preach the Gospel among you in 1782, and ordained your Pastor in 1783. — But his acquaintance with the gospel of Christ was more particularly enlarged after he came to *Chester*. He found that he had taken his opinions too much upon trust; and that while he imagined he believed the doctrine of *free justification*, he had retained those notions (of a work of grace to be wrought in the heart, independent of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and as a necessary requisite, upon which to ground our hope in him) that were entirely subversive of its nature, and of all the comfort and profit to be derived from it. The first discovery he made (under an occasional sermon preached in this place) of the glory of salvation, and its freeness for sinners as sinners, filled him with astonishment, and, at the same time, with that pleasing conviction of its truth, and suitableness to the cases of the perishing and helpless,

that he never lost sight of it.* It was the delight of his heart. It raised him up, he has said, from that state of barrenness and desertion in his own soul, that leaning to himself, he was in doubt whether he should have been able to preach another sermon. It was the chosen topic of his private conversation. It gave a new tincture to his discourses from the pulpit; and did not your heart burn within you, while he talked with you, and while he opened to you the scriptures? It spirited him up to a vigorous discharge of the duties of his station; so that ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably he behaved himself among you; and how he exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. The same truth even heightened his natural frankness and good temper, so that he always appeared chearful and conversible, and was generally respected. And it was a cordial to him under the heavy pressure of

* Mr. Eking published his thoughts on this subject, in the Summer of 1784, in a treatise entitled, *Three Essays on Grace, Faith, and Christian Experience*, Printed for Evans, in Pater-noster-Row, London; Poole, in Chester; and Wood, in Salop; price 1s. 6d. — I do not mean, that I am in every respect of the sentiments of this piece: But the book discovers a genius highly improveable, if the author had lived; and the leading principles are admirable, viz. That Christ is to be preached *freely*, to sinners as sinners — that there is no inherent qualification previously necessary to believing, or hoping in Christ — that there can be no spiritual life, or gracious work in the heart, before a man, as a sinner, believes — nor any faith that is saving, which does not receive peace of conscience, simply from believing the sufficiency and freeness of the blood of atonement,

of his last affliction. As often as the fever allowed him the free use of his reason, he bore an uniform testimony, that the doctrine he had preached was his unfailing consolation in the agonies of his bodily frame, and in the near prospect of death. He was not (as slanderously reported) *afraid to die*,* for he knew in whom he had believed. You will not, I am persuaded, speedily forget the last solemn, affecting, and yet comfortable farewell he took of the church, upon his death-bed, as one who was himself going to the arms of Jesus, and whose earnest prayer was, that he might, by and by, welcome you all there. Nor will you readily forget the two last subjects which (not aware that they would be his last) he preached upon to you. With what warmth did he inculcate it upon you, to *love one another as Christ hath loved you!* John xv. 12. With what spirit did he represent to you, that *when God built up Zion he would appear in his glory!* With what

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* THERE was not the smallest ground for this cruel calumny, or for the least surmise of the kind, in any one moment of his sickness; but the reverse appeared at all times, as all the by-standers can testify.—Another slander was also maliciously propagated, in *Chester*, and in *Wrexham*, That Mr. *Ecking's* death was occasioned by a cold he caught, in baptizing, Dec. 19th, 1784, which brought on a fever, &c. whereas it was well known to myself and the rest of his acquaintance, that he did not receive any detriment whatever, from that administration; but was in good health for more than a month after it, during which time also he took a journey to *Liverpool*, and returned home well and chearful. But I suppose if he had died, at any time within a twelvemonth and a day, after that or any other baptism, let it have been of what disorder it might, so partial and prejudiced a jury would have brought him in, *Guilty of self-murder by baptizing.*

confidence did he lay it down, as a maxim to be depended on, that the Lord regards the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer, Ps. cii. 16, 17. May his instructions be fixed in your hearts, and you be followers of him, even as he was of Christ!—Need I add, that your affection for your late Pastor ought to be shewn by your conscientious attention to the due order, the decent regularity of that church, whose welfare lay so near his heart, and by your sympathy with the affecting cases of his widow and surviving family? 'Tis sometimes observed, "When the minister dies, his widow may as well die with him, for the notice that will be afterwards taken of her." Be you an exception to this remark. May God comfort her under this trying, yet wise dispensation, and provide for her and her offspring! May the chief Shepherd also provide for you a Pastor after his own heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding!—What shall I, in conclusion, say, to those who have heard the witness my brother gave for Christ, and yet are unenlightened in the things that concern their eternal peace? He is gone before, to be unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish. But what confusion will fill your hearts and visages, if that gospel you have heard from him, be to you a savour of death unto death, and you sink from under the sound of mercy, into hopeless and irretrievable misery; aggravated also by the guilt, of having despised the beloved Son of God, in whom the Father is well-pleased! O! that you might no more slight the kind admonition, but hear so as to believe, and lay hold on eternal life. Amen!

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A T T H E G R A V E

MY FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

THE testimony you now give of your regard for our deceased brother, your tears and behaviour upon this occasion, speak more feelingly, I might say more eloquently, his worth, and are a better panegyric upon him, than all I am capable of offering. Why should I attempt to tell his value? What can I say more than was conspicuous to all his friends? And to endeavour to recount all he was, all you and I beheld him, a month, a week, two or three days ago, what will it be but to wound you afresh, to tear your hearts asunder, to take delight in your tears? — *And devout men, says the scripture, carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.* They mourned the death of a godly man and a brother. They mourned the loss of an associate with them in the cause of Christ. They mourned the loss of a man valiant for the gospel; of a man able to defend it; and who setting Jesus before him, feared the face of none in that which concerned his master; one from whose presence,

fence, steadiness and abilities, they hoped, in that infancy of the church, to derive the greatest advantages; yea, whose countenance seemed necessary, to give life and vigour to the whole interest; yet who was, by a sudden and unexpected stroke, cut off.—When they beheld his zeal and intrepidity; when they perceived the clearness of his judgment; when they listened to his eloquence, and the irresistible force of his arguments for the gospel and the truths it contains; when they looked upon his face, and saw it to be *as the face of an angel*, such was the fervour with which it glowed, such the majesty with which God adorned it, they said, “Surely the Lord hath raised up a glorious instrument, whose tongue shall carry conviction to the ears of thousands, and who will be long continued a pillar to support the church! Sure so pleasant a light will not be speedily put out! Where would be the wisdom of providence, in suffering the sword of persecution to separate him from us?” But Stephen was removed; and the higher their expectations had been of him, as a distinguished, a lasting, a growing ornament, the more pungent their sorrow, the more bitter their lamentations at his burial.—In like manner, methinks, I discern the emotions of your hearts, over the grave of our departed brother, “*Let us also go that we may die with him.*” Nor do I at all wonder that the first pangs of your grief, should force such suggestions into your minds. You have lost an amiable man, a valuable minister. And what enhances the sorrow, what gives it an edge superlatively cutting is, that while we remain on this sea of trouble, we shall, respecting this life, see his
face

face—no more.—For my own part, the deceased is one of those instances, in which God has set a lesson to teach me, that I should depend upon no friend but himself. True friendship is a precious article; and the more precious, because it is so very scarce. But my brother *Ecking* was that true friend; he was above disguise. He did not speak fair to the face, and entertain duplicity in his breast. Not only did he despise it as a man, but as a christian God had taught him, that to know the truth as it is in Jesus will infallibly lead to speak the truth from the heart. In short, he was *an Israelite indeed, in whose spirit there was no guile*; and if your loss is great of a preacher and pastor, mine is not small, of a sincere and disinterested brother in the gospel.—But I do not mean to proceed further here. I mean rather, to lead your thoughts to a problem, a knotty question in the ways of providence, which I do not pretend to unravel, or adequately to account for, but which perhaps I may be enabled to speak some things upon, for the composure of your minds under the present trying dispensation; a duty the more necessary, as possibly the workings of your hearts, and the enemy of your peace may almost have driven you to address God, in the unbelieving language the prophet *Jeremiah* once used, *Why is my pain perpetual and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? Wilt thou be altogether to me as a liar, and as waters that fail?*

HERE is an interest set up for the glory of God, and the honour of Jesus as King in Zion; set up to be an advocate for the simplicity of Christ, our alone righteousness in the sight of God, for the purity of his ordinances,

names, and the beautiful simplicity of his worship. A
 more *name*, a *party* are too contemptible for a *man* to
 engage in. My deceased brother abhorred the idea,
 much more the reality. The generosity of his soul
 would have carried him above its meanness; and his
 religion would not have admitted of its wickedness.
 But we have seen this interest thus set on foot, continu-
 ally beset with difficulties. And when former disap-
 pointments were judged to be more than amply com-
 pensated in our brother before us, — behold, how the
 fashion of things here below passeth away! Here is a
 church formed — a place of worship purchased — a
 minister settled — ordained — and at the conclusion of
 the *third* year of his ministry, a greater favourite than
 the day he began it — minister and people were united
 in mutual satisfaction — their ears hung upon his lips
 — and his heart was so set on fire, for their comfort,
 establishment and spirituality, that even the ravings of
 a delirium discovered their *steadfastness in the faith* to
 lie very near his soul. God also seemed to crown his
 labours with abundant success; and none of us appre-
 hended otherwise, this day month, than that the path
 of his usefulness would encrease as the shining light.
 But the great Arbiter of all things said, “ *finish thine*
 “ *earthly course, and come up hither.*” And he is not,
 for God hath taken him. — ’Tis well for *him* — but
 what shall we say to the disconsolate widow? What to
 the helpless children? What to the bereaved church?
 How shall we account for all this seeming confusion?
 Can it be right? Does the Lord love his people, while
 he thus chastens them with a rod, and inflicts stripes,
 the smart of which wrings their hearts to anguish, and
 extorts tears from their eyes? Hear the enemies of the
 cross.

cross of Christ, "Is this the interest of Jesus, that
 meets with so many obstacles? Can it be that Christ
 favours that cause, which he is, as it were, conti-
 nually overturning?" — Poor souls! They can see
 no further than the surface. Overwhelmed in sense,
 by sense they live, and by sense they are blinded.
 Let them alone, except in your prayers for them.
 Know ye not that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,
 and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth? Know
 ye not, that if ye be without chastisement whereof all
 are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons? Has
 God possessed us of a precious faith? How is faith to
 be tried but by difficulty? How is patience to gain
 strength without affliction? Had we no more to urge
 than, *God did it*; shall not the Judge of all the earth
 do right? Not only is God sovereign and uncontrol-
 labile; not only doth he according to his will, in the
 army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the
 earth, but he doth every thing with the most consum-
 mate wisdom, the most perfect propriety; and those
 very afflictions which, to the short-sighted views of men,
 seem against the people and church of God, are yet or-
 dered with that divine prudence and affection, that in-
 stead of being inimical, they will, in a course of time,
 appear friendly — necessary, and not to be dispensed
 with — benevolent, and for the advantage of them that
 are exercised thereby. I wish therefore to possess you
 of this idea, and pray that it may be fixed in your
 minds; that convinced of its truth, you may have it
 always before you. It will help to alleviate your sor-
 row; and be a suitable reply to that hasty tempta-
 tion, *all these things are against me*. Can you say,
 that God has not taken away our deceased brother in
 due

due time; at the time when, young as he was, he appeared to have his heart wholly engaged in the contemplation of the excellency of Christ; and when his behaviour on his death-bed bore, even a nobler testimony to the power of the gospel than did his former preaching—was a practical illustration of the truth, that the glorious righteousness of Jesus, received for the comfort of the soul, freely, unconditionally and simply as sinners, is a sufficient support when flesh and heart fail.—Let me add, the Lord knoweth our frame; he remembereth we are but dust; and there is more justice than perhaps is usually attended to, in the words of the prophet *Isaiah*, which (leaving out the addition of our translators) run, *the righteous is taken away from the evil*. Considering the depravity resident in the hearts of the godly, of the most improved christian, can you say, if my brother had lived longer, what temptations he might have been exposed to; and if the admiration of his hearers grew, as it appeared to do of late, whether it might not have had a bad effect in time, to cause a declension in that life and vigor of grace, now so visible in him, and through which he has left the stage of mortality, with so much honour to his divine master? I will go as far as any of you in replying, “*I hope not.*” But dare you answer more than that, for him or for yourselves? Was he not in the body? And do we not know enough of ourselves to cry out, “*Lead me not into temptation; but deliver me from evil?*”—Suppose further, that his life had been prolonged, and with that his knowledge of divine things had become more established, and his spirituality encreased. Considering the fluctuation of human opinion, and the melancholy certainty, that of those

those who admire a preacher, by far the greatest number are influenced by nothing better, than undigested notion, or the voice and address of the speaker, can you warrant that in time, my brother might not have been disregarded, by many of those who now professed themselves most pleased with him? In a word, can you take upon you to say any thing about the master, or that the success which hitherto attended his ministry, might not speedily have ebbed, as fast as it now flowed?—These reflections may at least *silence* the murmurs of the rebellious and unsubmitive heart.—But you rejoin, “Our pastor is dead, and we are left destitute; we know not where to look out for such another.”—And is Jesus the Shepherd of Israel dead also? Has his ability ceased, or is his love extinguished? Does he not know, better than you, the instrument he chuses to make most serviceable in his vineyard, and that branch of it which you constitute? If he call away one of his servants, will he leave his work deserted? Shall they be ashamed who trust in him? Shall praying breath be spent in vain? Do not entertain a suspicion of his love, or willingness to befriend you, lest, provoked by your unbelief, he give you that trial, which, it may be, at some seasons you are apt to fear.—By how many methods can God send you that suitable supply of spiritual food, which he knows you want! Let me recur to an instance already mentioned; *devout men carried Stephen to his burial; and made great lamentation over him.* They perhaps thought that so exemplary a person being snatched away, the church had sustained irreparable damage. Little were they aware how his loss was to be supplied; little, that the instrument pitched upon, to

declare

declare the name of Christ to the world, was an accessory to the murder of Stephen. *The witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen. And Saul was consenting unto his death. And Saul was soon after converted to the christian faith, and sent abroad as a chosen vessel, to turn many from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* I hint this to remind you, that Christ hath all hearts in his hands, can help you by means you are not able to foresee, and even turn his most malignant enemies into obedient servants, ardent to exert their utmost efforts, in promoting his kingdom among men. — In whatever way he design to do you good, wait upon him, who now hideth his face, and be not weary in well-doing; for in due season you shall reap, if you faint not. In the mean time often recollect your late Pastor, and consider the end of his conversation, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever.* — With this exhortation we shut up the grave, and for a short term quit these receptacles of death. — Farewell! ye mouldering remains of a much respected brother. — 'Tis the cold consolation of the hopeless to add, "We shall shortly return, and be laid beside you." Hail! that triumphant morn, when death shall be swallowed up in victory; when you, with ourselves, and the multitude of the blessed that surrounds us, shall rise again; when the trumpet shall sound, and they who sleep in the dust shall awake; when corruption shall put on incorruption, and the mortal put on immortality; when Christ who is our life shall appear, and we also appear with him in glory, and so shall we ever be with the Lord! Amen! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!



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